

THE CONSERVATION FUND

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June 16, 2005

Mr. Mark Friedrichs, PI-40
Office of Policy and International Affairs
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Ave. SW
Washington, DC 20585

Re: Comments on Section 1605(b)

Dear Mr. Friedrichs:

The Conservation Fund would like to take this opportunity to comment on the draft Technical Guidelines for the revised Voluntary Reporting of Greenhouse Gasses, as well as the Draft Technical Guidelines as referenced in the Notice of Availability and Opportunity to Comment published in Vol. 70, No. 56 of the Federal Register of Thursday March 24, 2005.

The Conservation Fund is pleased that we were asked to present our evaluation of the draft Technical Guidelines—Greenhouse Gas Inventory Methods for Forestry at the workshop held in Riverdale, MD on May 5, 2005. We are also glad to have participated in the meeting with you and DOE staff as well as USDA staff on June 8, 2005. The following issues were all discussed at the two sessions.

The Conservation Fund has carried out nine forestry-base terrestrial carbon sequestration projects affecting more than 23,000 acres in cooperation with various companies, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and several state Fish and Wildlife Agencies. These projects have involved purchase, afforestation, and donation of land to the agency, as well as afforestation of additional agency lands. In addition to the carbon sequestration benefits these projects provide they provide important fish and wildlife habitat, water quality benefits, floodwater retention, and increased opportunity for public outdoor recreation. We do not want to see reporting and registration rules that would be a disincentive for conduct of similar projects in the future, rather we would like to see this kind of land conservation encouraged.

We provided technical comments at the workshop on May 5 and we request they be made part of the record. We also have the higher level concerns that were the subject of the June 8 meeting.




Our major issue, and the one we wish to highlight here, is that of landownership and entity reporting. We believe that the reporting entity should be the entity with a financial interest that caused the project to go forward. In the case of our projects the entity should be the company who provided the funding, without which the project would not have occurred. To force a small landowner or a public agency to report continually on a project in which they have no continuing stake provides a disincentive for participation. In the case of publicly –owned lands, we believe that the National Wildlife Refuge or state wildlife management area (as opposed to lands help primarily for their forest products) should be considered the same as a farm. Local managers have budgetary and financial control of all operations at the local level. Unless,our interpretation holds, it would be unrealistic to expect an entire agency, or just the land management side of a public agency, to conduct a complete inventory of its emissions. Considered at the local level, we are certain that these areas will be determined to be small emitters and the reporting and registration process can go forward with a minimum of unnecessary effort, and future projects will be encouraged.

Attached is an issue paper with two case studies that was prepared under the auspices of PowerTree Carbon Company, LLP. We participated in its development and a draft served as the major vehicle for our discussions on June 8. We endorse it, request that it be made an official part of our comments, and believe that its suggested solutions to the issues raised should be incorporated into the final Guidelines.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and for considering our thoughts.

Sincerely,



Lawrence A. Selzer
President and CEO